

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed Comcast-NBC merger, and at the same time to the selling off (and out) of the Internet, the last bastion of freedom of speech.

Competition in all business is much talked about, by now hardly practiced. Media in particular is by now distributed only by a handful of outfits. The upshot, of course, is higher prices (resulting in less access) combined with ever lessening content (resulting in an ignorant polity). Comcast in particular is among the worst offenders, along with the other Murdocks of the world bent solely on profiteering by way of appealing to the least, thus worst, in each of us.

One would think that what has transpired over recent decades would be self-evident to any rational, seriously thinking person interested in the social good, which is also then the good of and for each. Social Darwinist (never put by Darwin himself) is invariably destructive of societies and yet that is the credo that is followed when the fat are let loose to gobble down the desperately thin. Big mergers like the one in question are most destructive of independent media in the final analysis. I've witnessed the shuttering of small bookstores in my area as a result of unfair competition. Public radio and television cannot compete either. Their sole option is to accept funding from operations who would dictate content. Examples of such practices are countless.

Shamelessly, government has done virtually nothing to stem this tide by which any one of group who holds and expresses a dissenting opinion is drown out.

At the time of the American Revolution there were hundreds, perhaps thousands, of small publishing operations disseminating a wide and varied array of opinion alongside any news of the day. This tradition began to die off just a few decades ago when the profit motive became just about the sole motive. I'm old enough to recall a different time. The job done by all corporate media is abominable, so stupefying is what is disseminated. The result is evident every two years after exit from voting booths. Government has become by and for big business while the voting public has no idea of the candidates for whom it's voting.

An immense transfer of wealth has been the other result—from those who have less and less to those hardly needy of more. Again, while mega-media conglomerates continue to engage in dumbing down what used to be a well-informed public.

Now we're witnessing once again the demise of what began as an open forum; namely, the Internet. Along with increasing concentration of other forms of media. Now Comcast bent on swallowing up NBC (hardly an indy either since owned by GE), after Murdock got his both his newspapers and television stations in the same markets. Satellite television is provided by a duopoly, both providers no less price-gougers than Comcast. And also deciders of what can and cannot be seen and told. (DirecTV still refuses to carry C-Span 3.)

(Two years ago I wrote the FCC of DirecTV's shoddy business practices when it "to put it plainly and truthfully" extorted several hundred dollars from this household by threatening to cut off service entirely if we did not pay up for a sports package we'd already canceled. We were forced to wait another year for the appropriate "window" during which customers can cancel. Needless to note, no mention of this "window" is ever made when the packages are sold.)

So at what point does government and its agencies intend to make some effort to see to the public interest as opposed to that of media conglomerates? Just recently the Supreme Court rendered an absurd decision which the majority claimed was a result of strict interpretation of the Constitution. I'm not myself aware of where in that document it says that more money means more votes, albeit there's some hinting at that. But when a previous federal court decision magically construed corporations to be human beings I suppose it had to follow "by a twisted logic" that any was then free to spend as much as necessary to buy votes. So much for democracy.

When does government intend to see to maintaining some semblance of democracy? Because, as Orwell warned, democracy and nothing less is what is at stake.

I urge the FCC to do the right thing from a democratic standpoint, which is to say from the people's perfectly reasonable and thus sane standpoint, by deciding in favor of the people and not in favor of a handful of media giants bent on domination, whether or not any of mega-media's spokespersons are remotely articulate, let alone honest, enough to speak patently plain intentions. By now, dishonesty is practically regarded as a virtue, thanks in no small part to the very dominant media of which I've been writing espousing/disseminating a complete disdain for any human-based universal ethics whatsoever. Media certainly does influence thought and with ever-increasing concentration of media that influence has proven nothing less than disastrous for what once was a real-deal (as opposed to only in newspeak claim) democracy.

Thank you for your attention,